4: Cummins D-4 (no date) 1937 MD1 Syria MD1

DERMATOGLYPHICS IN PEOPLES OF THE NEAR EAST

I. LEBANESE: MITWALI

HAROLD CUMMINS AND W. M. SHANKLIN
Tulane University and American University of Beirut, Syria

121 This report is presented as a record of data toward an eventual analysis of racial variation in dermatoglyphics. It is to be hoped that a broad comparison of races on this basis may be eventually possible, but it will be necessary to continue the accumulation of records on various populations, perhaps from time to time taking stock of progress as has been done recently by Steggerda, Steggerda and Lane for the palmar features (Middle American Research Series, publication 7, Tulane University, '36).

124 The material here treated represents a population not ● 101 hitherto investigated from the standpoint of dermatoglyphics. 795 The Mitwali are a Syrian mountain people, living in the southern Lebanon range. They are Moslems, but adhere to the Shiite sect rather than to the Sunni which is common to the region. There are 138 subjects in the series, males and females being in the proportion of about two to one; in view of the small numbers the sexes are combined. The subjects are mainly children in the government schools, the adult population having proved generally unsuitable for printing—on account of extensive callouses.

141 The palmar features, main lines and patterns, are tabulated 128 in tables 1 and 2, their formulations following the methods of Cummins et al. (Am. J. Phys. Anthrop., XII, '29).

The data on lines A and D have been further analyzed, to determine the main-line index which has been suggested by Cummins (Middle American Research Series, Tulane University, publication 7, '36) as a value denoting the degree of slant of the general palmar configuration. For the 276 hands

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REPORT ON JAZIRAH

101 Geographically, Jazirah, i.e., "the Island", is that strip of territory lying between the rivers Dijla and Euphrates, but for the purpose of this report, the term Jazirah is understood in its administrative meaning as a Mohafaza of Syria, and will be studied as such.

AREA OF JAZIRAH AND ITS CULTIVABLE LANDS

The "Statistical Abstract of Syria" for 1950 gives the total area of Jazirah as 2,217,000 hectares divided between the Mohafaza center, i.e., Hassakeh, Qamishli, and Dijla, in the following proportion:

Mohafaza Center	1,525,000 hectares
Qada of Qamishli	392,000 hectares
Qada of Dijla	300,000 hectares

311 Of this total area, according to the same source, 444,266 hectares were cultivated in 1948-49, and 1,701,284 hectares were cultivable but uncultivated, while the uncultivable lands were only 71,450 hectares.

This terminology of cultivable and uncultivable is greatly misleading. If by cultivable is meant the lands which are not rocky or mountainous or forested, the terminology is right though it loses its economic meaning. But if by it is meant lands which can be planted and rendered productive to show some profit, then other factors have to be considered, and the productive "cultivable" area of Jazirah is greatly reduced.

152 The first of these factors is the amount of rainfall. It is really astonishing that the Syrian Government has not deemed it necessary to establish agricultural stations in different regions of Jazirah to record at least the amount of rainfall in the different localities. The only such station is at Hassakeh which is not primarily a wheat growing district and the mean annual rainfall over a period of nine years is less than 300 mm. This average is less than the minimum required for successful rain-fed cultivation.

I. The Mohafaza Center

311 Therefore about 80% of the 1,525,000 hectares mentioned as
312 cultivable in the Mohafaza Center are in fact uncultivable unless

7:Lewis S-5 (ca. 1940-45) 1948 MD1 Syria MD1

MALARIA, IRRIGATION, AND SOIL EROSION IN CENTRAL SYRIA

NORMAN N. LEWIS

THIS study of the Selemiya region of central Syria had its origin in a modest wartime public-health program. Hundreds of patients suffering from malaria in the villages of this district were regularly treated by a mobile clinic, and it soon became obvious that this work had to be supplemented if not replaced by swamp drainage and other measures of malaria control. The necessary investigations showed that soil erosion in the hills in the east of the region was partly responsible for the swamps on the plain. The swamps themselves were frequently associated with ancient irrigation works. Thus various problems of the region—agricultural, social, and medical—were closely linked in origin and development. It was found that attempts to solve any one of them alone could not be more than partially successful, and the conclusion reached was that the ideal solution would have to be radical, comprehensive, and on a large-scale regional basis.

The Landscape

The greater part of the governmental subdistrict (caza) of Selemiya is a plain. Bounding it sharply on the west are low plateaus, capped by a level bed of basalt a few feet thick; to the southeast are ranges of hills, part of the Palmyrene group, to which the local collective name of Jebel Bil'as may be given.

The ground slope over much of the region is toward the town of Selemiya; drainage from an area of 620 square miles converges on the low flat land around the town. Because of the continuous subsurface flow, a perennial stream rises at Ain ez Zerqa, to flow 12 miles to the west to join the Orontes. All other perennial streams, however, are only a few hundred or thousand yards long and are used for irrigation; most of them rise in artificial underground channels. Most of the watercourses are wadis, dry or nearly dry for much of the year. In the hills these are steep, V-shaped valleys, on the plain generally wide, shallow, gravel-filled channels in gentle, open valleys.

Figure 2 gives a simplified indication of the configuration. Hydrologically, the strata may be simply grouped into the Cretaceous limestones

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> Mr. Lewis, Scholar of St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, was in Syria during the war and is now principal instructor at the Middle East Centre for Arab Studies, Shemlan, Lebanon, a training center for British government officials in the Middle East.

9: Hitti S-5 (ca. 1926) 1928 MD1 Syria MD1
Druze MD6

[p 1]

CHAPTER I

A UNIQUE AND SECRET SECT

S. D 795 101 175

Two Historical Fossils:—The Druzes of Syria and the Samaritans of Palestine are two unique communities not to be found elsewhere in the whole world. Like social fossils in an alien environment, these two peoples have survived for hundreds of years in that land rightly described as a "Babel of tongues" and a "museum of nationalities."

The Samaritans are the remnants of the tribes from Assyria and Persia who were transplanted by Sargon some seven hundred years before Christ to take the place of the "ten tribes" who were carried into captivity.[1] They figured in the life of Christ as is illustrated by the case of the "Samaritan woman" and the story of the "good Samaritan." Today they are represented by about one hundred and eighty persons who intermarry among themselves and are becoming rapidly extinct. Their habitat is modern Nāblus (biblical Shechem), and their religion is ancient Judaism mixed with pagan survivals.

D 174

The Druzes have no such clear record to show regarding their origin as a people and as a sect. Their ethnographical origins, no less than their ritual practices and religious beliefs, are shrouded in mystery. Appearing for the first time on the pages of history at Wādi-al-Taym near Mt. Hermon in anti-Lebanon, as professors of the divinity of the sixth Fāṭimite Caliph in Cairo (996–1020 A.D.), the Druzes have lived their semi-independent lives secluded in their mountain fastnesses of Lebanon, unmindful of the progress of the world around them, and almost entirely forgotten by the outside world.

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[1] *Cf.* James A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans, the Earliest Jewish Sect* (Philadelphia, 1907), pp. 46–57.

9: Hitti S-5 (ca. 1926) 1928 MD1 Syria MD1
Druze MD6

Other Secret Sects:—The Druze people constitute one of the two leading secret sects found only in Syria, the other being the Nuṣayriyyah inhabiting the mountains north of Tripoli. The Ismā'iliyyah of the Ḥimṣ and Ḥamāh district, another secret sect, are descended from the Assassins,[1] who for two centuries or so struck awe and terror into the hearts of the Crusaders, and are represented today by a few other sectarians in Persia and India. The Yezīdis, so-called devil worshipers, practice their hidden rites in the out-of-the-way hills between Antioch and Aleppo and have coreligionists in Kurdistān and Armenia.

Special Interest of this Study:—But of all these sects Druzism is perhaps the most interesting and important. It is still a living force. Its followers form to the present day a vigorous and flourishing community in the Lebanon. Its learned system has not changed since it was first inaugurated in the early part of the eleventh century. The Islam of the Near East has changed and adapted itself to the requirements of the varying conditions. The Christianity of the Near East has changed. But the Druze system has been and still is the same.

The modernizing influence has in late years brought within its sphere quite a large number of the young and uninitiated Druzes. The report of the American University of Beirūt for last year indicates that there are in that institution alone thirty-six Druze students and five Druze teachers. But no one with first-hand knowledge of the situation would go so far as even to recognize the existence of a "modernist movement" alleged to be aiming at divulging the Druze beliefs, much less to declare "It is understood that Dr. Bliss of Beirūt will be the probable intermediary of communication with the western world if this disclosure takes place."[2]

In fact the outside world knows so little about the contents of this religion that in a recent session of the Permanent Mandates

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[1] Arabic *Ḥashshāshīn* = those addicted to the use of a stupefying weed.

[2] De Lacy O'Leary, *A Short History of the Fatimid Khalifate* (London, 1923), p. 244. Dr. Bliss died in 1920.

128 Other questions which would call for full discussion in a comprehensive treatise have been wholly ignored. The work has been described as an essay in order to indicate these limitations in its scope, no less than to avoid making too high a claim for the studies and experience upon which it is based.

2

121 It is important to make clear the way in which the term
101 'Syria' is used in the title and the text. Confusion has sometimes arisen from its use in several different senses: (i) In the past it has often been used to refer to the whole area stretching from the Taurus Mountains in the north to the Sinai Peninsula in the south, and from the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the Syrian Desert on the east. This area constitutes in many ways a single geographical unit, and its indigenous inhabitants form in some sense a single people. (ii) After the War of 1914-1918 this geographical unit was divided into two political areas; the southern area, which includes the regions now known as Palestine and Transjordan, was placed under a British Mandate, and the northern under a French. The term 'Syria' is sometimes used to refer to the whole northern area. (iii) This northern area was subdivided by the Mandatory Power into several political units, to which was given the collective name of 'Les États du Levant' or 'The Levant States'. From 1925 to 1936 they were four in number: the States of Syria and Greater Lebanon, or, as they are now called, the Syrian and Lebanese Republics, and the Governments of Latakia (known at [illegible] the 'State of the Alawis') and Jebel Druze. In 1936 [illegible] two Governments were formally annexed to the State of Syria, and were known no longer as 'Governments' but as 'Provinces'. Thus the term 'Syria' is often used in a third sense, to refer to the State of Syria, before 1936 excluding, and since then including, Latakia and Jebel Druze.

The explicit subject of this essay is 'Syria' in the second of the three senses defined above. This area will ordinarily be referred to as 'the French Mandated Territories', 'Syria and Lebanon' or 'the Levant States'. In the historical chapters (I-IV), however, it has been necessary to deal in general with the larger, geographical unit of the first definition. In these chapters, therefore, the term 'Syria' will be used to

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria M01

cover the whole of that unit, which will normally be referred to as 'geographical Syria'. Elsewhere in this book the word 'Syria' will only be employed to describe the State of Syria or Syrian Republic: that is, in the third sense.

All these terms are used simply for convenience and without any desire to prejudice the questions, which will be touched upon in the course of the essay, whether and on what grounds the political separation of the British from the French Mandated Territories, and of Syria from Lebanon, was justified.

PART ONE

I. THE HISTORY OF SYRIA[1]

1

101 131 EVEN were there no Syrian people a Syrian problem would still exist. Syria owes its political importance less to the qualities of its population than to its geographical position. Before its history can be fully understood, it is necessary to grasp the nature of the land and its relation with the surrounding world.

Syria is part of a larger area which may be treated as a single unit, in the sense that the course of affairs in one part of it has always had a peculiarly close relationship with that in some or 131 all of the other parts. The southern base of this area is the 133 Arabian peninsula, bounded on the west by the Red Sea, on the south by the Indian Ocean, and on the east by the Persian Gulf. The west of the peninsula, the Hejaz and Yemen, is hilly and in parts fertile, and so too is a smaller area in the south-east; but the greater portion of the interior is fit only for pasturage, except in the oases. In the south, it is a sandy waste, in the centre, Nejd, a dry, hilly and often stony steppe. North of Nejd there is another belt of sand; and north of this belt is the dry steppe of the Syrian Desert, growing narrower as it goes northwards. Running in a semi-circle around the edge of the Syrian Desert is the 'Fertile Crescent', a belt of cultivable land bounding the area of pasturage. It may itself be divided into two parts. The western part is a land of mountain-ranges, valleys and plains; this is geographical Syria. The eastern part is a vast plain, created and maintained by the two great rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, which run southwards through it, finally meeting and flowing together into the Persian Gulf; this is Iraq or Mesopotamia. The Fertile Crescent is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea and on the south-east by the head-waters of the Persian Gulf. In the north and east it is hemmed in by mountain-ranges: to the north the Taurus Mountains, the southern part of the Anatolian highlands which stretch across Asia Minor, to the north-east the mountains of Kurdistan, and to the east the Persian plateau. Joined to the western part of the Fertile Crescent by the peninsula of Sinai, but separated from Arabia by the Red Sea, is the land of Egypt, the fertile valley of the Nile surrounded by sandy deserts.

[1] In Chapters I–IV the word 'Syria' is used to refer to 'geographical Syria' as defined in the Introduction.

from outside than were the villages. The foreign merchants and artisans in the coastal towns and Aleppo, the pilgrims who every year met in Damascus for their long journey down the pilgrims' road to the Holy Cities in Arabia, left their mark. Thus beside the society of the desert and the countryside there flourished an urban society of merchants and craftsmen. Not only was the life of the great towns very different from that of the countryside; they differed one from another. Each had a life of its own and was the focus of an intense local loyalty.

10

The Arabo-Islamic community of Syria was a part, although in some ways a distinctive part, of two larger units: the Arabic-speaking world which extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the frontiers of Persia, and included Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Arabian Peninsula; and the Islamic world, stretching as far as the marches of China and embracing, in addition to the Arabic countries, Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, Turkestan and large parts of Africa, India, China and the East Indies. In spite of local differences, of internal conflicts and of the difficulties of communication, each of these worlds was unified on a profound level.

Over a large part of the Arab and Islamic worlds, the spiritual and social unity which they possessed was reinforced by the political unity derived from common membership of the Ottoman Empire. The positive virtue of Ottoman rule was that it provided this political unity; its negative that it did not interfere with the life and customary law of the subject-peoples. Nomads by origin, the Ottoman Turks cared little for the arts of peace, for commerce and industry, or for culture. They left them to others, and thus contributed nothing essential to the civilization of the Arab provinces which they ruled for four hundred years. In conquering the Arab world they had themselves been conquered by it. They had become Moslems, and in their intellectual and social life had adapted themselves to Arab ways.

The Turks performed also another function. Their military strength preserved the Arab civilization from interference or even from living contact with other civilizations. In the early Islamic centuries such contacts had existed, and the Arabo-

14:International Bank S-5 (1954)1955 MD1 Syria MD1

CHAPTER 1 *STRUCTURE OF THE SYRIAN ECONOMY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT*

Introduction

101 178 Syria, although an independent country only since 1945, has had a long and chequered history. It has seen many conquerors and witnessed the rise and fall of many civilizations. Since time immemorial it has been the frontier land where rival civilizations penetrating from the East and the West have contended for supremacy. The Sumerians, Chaldeans, Assyrians and Persians came from the East, and the Greeks and Romans from the West. Still later the Eastern Roman Empire of the early Christian era gave way, successively, to the Arabs and the Turks. Even after Turkish rule became firmly established, Syria remained for a long time the place where the caravans from the West and East met and an active trade in goods took place. Although it became basically eastern in its orientation, it was never wholly without contact with the West, and western influence was again reasserted when Turkish rule was terminated after the first World War.

Thus the culture, economy and political system of Syria are a mixture of East and West. The diverse elements have only been partially fused. The East and West co-exist in rather uneasy balance. Modern technology has invaded Syria in the form of factories, mechanized farms and motor cars, but the craftsmen still ply their trade in crowded bazaars, most of the land is still cultivated by time-hallowed methods and under ancient systems of tenure, and camels and donkeys still play a role—although a diminishing one—in transport. Modern commercial banks have by no means displaced the traditional money lenders and the bazaar banks or *sarafs*, and the wholehearted acceptance of western capitalism is still impeded to a small extent by the Moslem aversion to interest as usury. Democratic, parliamentary institutions have been borrowed from the West, but their stability is periodically threatened by divisive forces and the tradition of autocratic rule inherited from the past. Syrian nationalism, born as a rebellion against foreign domination, is now engaged in the

14:International Bank S-5 (1954) 1955 MD1 Syria MD1

challenging task of fusing the positive elements of both its eastern and its western heritage into a cohesive whole.

Population and Land

According to official estimates, Syria at the end of 1953 had a population of about 3.65 million, including some 150,000 Bedouins who lead a nomadic or semi-nomadic existence. Although demographic statistics are far from adequate, it appears probable that the population has been growing at an annual rate of somewhere between 2% and 3% during the last decade. Most of the population is rural:[1] about 60% live in villages and towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants, and each of the two largest cities—Damascus, the capital, and Aleppo, the commercial center of the country—has a population close to 400,000. About 86% of the population are Moslem or belong to offshoots of the Moslem religion, and nearly all of the balance are adherents of a considerable number of Christian denominations.

As a country with an area of 181,337 square kilometers (72,234 square miles), about three-fourths the size of the United Kingdom, Syria cannot be said to be densely populated. While less than a third of the area is cultivable, the proportion of the population to the land already under cultivation compares favorably with that of other countries in the Near and Middle East. In Syria there is one hectare[2] of cultivated land per inhabitant, or about 10% more than in Turkey and Iran, twice as much as in Greece and Iraq and eight to nine times as much as in Egypt.

There is still plenty of land available in Syria but water severely limits its utilization. The country lies to the leeward of mountain ranges in the west and north which intercept much of the rainfall. Except for the coastal region of Latakia province, Syria is largely cut off from the rain-bearing winds of the Mediterranean by mountains, the Djebel Ansariya (Alaouit mountains) in Latakia, and, farther south, after the intervening Tripoli-Homs gap, by the twin ranges of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon which in turn give way to the Hermon range. Thus the area which can support rain-fed cultivation is confined to a rather narrow belt extending roughly like a crescent from the Hauran in the south northward to Aleppo and then eastward along the Turkish frontier. Fortunately for Syria, its

[1] See Annex C, p. 292.

[2] A hectare = 2.471 acres.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
SYRIA MDI
LEBANON MEI

Chapter Ten

SYRIA AND LEBANON

The Land and the People

The area of the present Syria and Lebanon lies to the north of Arabia Deserta and is the western horn of the Fertile Crescent. The two republics do not enclose within their boundaries a natural geographic entity and their climate and topography are best studied in relation to the surrounding countries;[1] but within the political boundaries of the two states, the following geographical divisions may roughly be distinguished:

(1) *The Coastal Strip.* This is about twenty miles wide near Latakia and rather less just north of Tripoli, but in some places disappears and the mountains meet the sea. Olives, bananas, citrus, and vegetables are cultivated intensively near Beirut.

(2) *The Mountains.* Starting from the north, the first coastal mountains are the Jebel Ansariya (also known as the Alawi Mountains) which average 4,000 feet and are well populated on the western slopes. To the south is the Homs–Tripoli gap and then starts the Lebanon range with peaks of over 10,000 feet. Even on the upper slopes of this range water is plentiful, there is close cultivation, and the villages and towns are prosperous. Near Beirut are situated the mountain resorts to which most of the city workers move each night when the summer brings its humid heat. The interior ranges of mountains lying parallel to that of the Lebanon are the Anti-Lebanon (between Homs and Zahle) reaching over 7,000 feet and the range of Hermon (between Zahle and the Israel border) which reaches 9,200 feet. Water and cultivation are far less plentiful on these than on the coastal mountains. Farther inland still and to the south of Damascus lie the Leja, a bleak area of igneous rock, and the Jebel Druze, which reaches 5,000–6,000 feet and lies north of the Jordan border.

(3) *Plains and Plateaux.* Hardly any of the territory of Syria and Lebanon lies less than 700 feet above sea-level and south of Hama almost all the land is over 1,600 feet. The richest agricultural land is on fairly high ground and forms part of a

[1] See W. B. Fisher, *The Middle East; a Physical, Social, and Regional Geography* (London, Methuen, 1950).

63:Simmons et al G-5 (1941-1961) 1964
M1 Middle East
SYRIA MD1

6

Syria

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

The Republic of Syria was constituted in 1943, when France relinquished control over the mandated territories of Lebanon and Syria. Geographically and ethnically Syria forms an integral part of the eastern Mediterranean region, but politically it has undergone progressive modification since the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire following World War I. Considerable confusion in terminology arises from the fact that the entire area was then designated as Syria. It was mandated to France by the League of Nations in 1923 as the separate territories of Syria and Lebanon. Subsequently, for a brief period the region was divided into the autonomous "Levant States" of Lebanon, Syria, Latakia and Jebel ed Druz. With the annexation of Latakia and Jebel ed Druz as provincial units in 1936, and the cession of the Alexandretta district to Turkey in 1939, the present boundaries of Syria were established. The country now includes an area of approximately 71,000 square miles. In the west, it has a coastline of about 104 miles on the Mediterranean Sea and, to the south, common frontiers with Lebanon and northern Israel. Inland, it is surrounded by Turkey on the north, Iraq on the east and the southeast, and Jordan on the south.

The interior of the country is essentially a semiarid plateau, sloping to the basins of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and backed by chains of mountains in the north and the west. The highlands on the Turkish border are not well defined, but those in the west differentiate distinct geographic regions. In the north, the Nusairiyeh mountains, with elevations up to 5,000 feet,

p. 135(A)